

Shutesbury Selectboard Meeting Minutes  
March 25, 2025 Hybrid Meeting Format

Selectboard members present: Melissa Makepeace-O'Neil/Co-Chair, Eric Stocker/ Co-Chair, Rita Farrell/ Co-Chair

Staff present and Guests: Gabriele Voelker: Interim Town Administrator, Chief Burgess, Gail Fleischaker, Tom Siefert, Brennan Mailloux, Beth Willson, Meryl Mandell, Grace Bannasch, Paul Lyons, Leslie Bracebridge, Penelope Kim.

Farrell calls the meeting to order at 5:00 pm

Agenda Review: As posted.

Public Comment: None

General Business:

- I. Signing the FY25 Emergency Communications Grant Reimbursement Form:
  - a. This is for the Fire Department, and it is money to get reimbursed to the town. The total is \$2,784.74.

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion to approve the grant reimbursement form for \$2,784.74, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

- II. Discuss changing Jeff Lacy's Zoning Board of Appeals appointment from Associate to Regular Member for the sake of resuming as Chair:
  - a. Jeff was on both the Planning Board and Zoning Board before he moved out of town. Jeff is willing to step in to be a regular member of the Zoning Board as he is very seasoned in the role. This would make three members instead of two, which would allow for more efficient operation.

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion to appoint Jeff Lacy to the Shutesbury Zoning Board of Appeals, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

- III. Vote to change Town Meeting to May 31<sup>st</sup>. Town Clerk will discuss presentation of local election and vote:
  - a. Brennan Mailloux sent out a survey to all department heads and town boards to receive responses about whether the new date would work. Farrell stated there

were overwhelming positive responses that May 31<sup>st</sup> does work. This change of date she also added was in response to accommodating the difficult budgeting process this year, particularly the Regional School budget.

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion to change the Town Meeting date to May 31st, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

- b. Bannasch then stated that the local election location will be at the Town Hall not the school, and that the local election will be from 8 am to 5 pm as the polling hours have been extended. Bannasch will be mailing out little cards to every household that state the new Town Meeting date as well as the Local Election information. Bannasch stated she will use Town Announce to make announcements as well, leading up to the events.
- c. Lyons said that the new Moderator will be shadowing him right up until the time of the Town Meeting, and he believes everything will go smoothly.

**VOTE:** Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to sign the Warrant for Annual Town Election, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

#### IV. Sign new Town Administrator Contract:

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion to execute the Town Administrator Contract with Hayley Bolton as the new Town Administrator, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell: aye; motion carries.

#### V. Sign Commonwealth of Massachusetts Standard Contract Form. (Department of Energy Resources) Green Communities Grant:

- a. This was phase two of the Green Communities Grant for the LED lighting at the Elementary School. This would complete the school lighting work.

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion to execute the signing of the Massachusetts Standard Contract Form for the Green Communities Grant, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

#### VI. Discuss removal of sediment from the lake at the inlet at 2 Wyola Dr. Potential consultation?

- a. Farrell discussed that at 2 Wyola Dr. there is an inlet where the sediment has built up and historically the Gould's shared it was a way of loading boats into the lake. It has since become a problem and Farrell explained that it is the town's property. Farrell states this problem would have to go in front of the Conservation Committee. In this case it is town land, but Farrell stated it is for the benefit of a

homeowner. After research she stated that her recommendation is any cost associated with the permitting and the repairs would have to be absorbed by the associated homeowners, the Goulds.

- b. Willson stated she would work with the Goulds on potential grants and the town would assist with the paperwork such as the permits.
- c. Farrell stated that the Town would be the applicants, but the homeowners would be responsible for the consulting and costs. The Conservation Commission would have to approve the plan.

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion to indicate conditional approval of the removal of sediment, subject to an acceptable plan and permitted by the Conservation Commission at 2 Wyola Dr, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

VII. Discuss joining the Fort River Forward MVP grant application for culvert assessments within the Fort River watershed. Beth Willson to present.

- a. Beth Willson presented information about joining the Fort River Forward Municipal Vulnerability Program grant application for culvert assessments within the Fort River watershed. The project would involve hiring students (UMass) to conduct culvert assessments using a specific assessment method and entering data into a large database. The town's commitment would primarily be in-kind contributions, including participation in meetings and information sharing events.
- b. Willson stated this application is due next Friday April 4<sup>th</sup>, and there is an outline that can be used.

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion to join the joint MVP grant application with the five communities that will do culvert assessments within the Fort River watershed, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

VIII. Vote on Expression of interest for Rural Development Fund.

- a. This is a grant program with a set aside for a Rural Development Fund, used for a variety of things such as infrastructure, culverts, engineering, design, etc. The proposed project was for hydrologic and hydraulic modeling of the watershed around Lake Wyola to develop conceptual recommendations for stormwater management. FRCOG has done a lot of background work on this, and this first step is solely an expression of interest and then they will come back to the town with the application for submission later. This will be an annual task. These grants Farrell stated can go up to 500,000 dollars and can include construction.

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion to approve the submission of an Expression of Interest for the Rural Development Fund for the hydrologic and hydraulic modeling of the watershed around Lake Wyola, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

- IX. Execution of CPA grant agreement with regional schools for track funding.
- a. This grant was voted on at a previous Town Meeting for \$136,000. The grantee is the Amherst Regional Public Schools. This grant agreement lays out the obligatory frameworks for the regional schools.

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion for the town to execute the CPA agreement for the Amherst Regional Schools, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Stocker: aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

- X. Signing Amherst Pelham School Debt Acknowledgement Letter
- a. The Amherst Pelham School Committee voted to borrow money for the costs of projects such as for HVAC, and fire safety upgrades as well as others. The amount authorized to be borrowed is \$485,000. The board's role was to acknowledge receipt of this information and had 60 days to express any disapproval if necessary.

**VOTE:** Makepeace O'Neil makes a motion to sign the letter from the Amherst Regional School related to the authorization of borrowing as receipt of the letter, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

- XI. Preparation for March 27 meeting.
- a. The meeting will be held at Shutesbury Elementary School with Paul Lyons helping by moderating. There will be a Q/A session, as well as the chat feature being used on Zoom for questions. The meeting will run from 6pm until 8 pm, so there will be a limited period of time for questions. It will be expected for question askers to introduce themselves in some fashion, rather than remain anonymous.
  - b. Paul Lyons stated he posted on NextDoor links to the Bylaws, and meeting minutes from the Review Committee as a way of giving background information. Lyons then stated he will also send out a Town Announce.
  - c. Lyons said we do not want to get in an extensive back and forth questioning session. Rather he would like the public to direct their questions towards him as the Moderator, and he will make determination as to whether the question is appropriate for answering.

- XII. Accept Sean Genereux's resignation as Recycling Coordinator and Appointing Meryl Mandell as Interim Recycling Coordinator.
- a. Meryl Mandell said she plans to post on Town Announce the job of Recycling Coordinator and hopes to interview for the position. After conducting interviews, they would then make a recommendation to the Select Board for employment. She is hopeful they can find someone and believes it would be a great position for a retired individual. There is an annual stipend in the range of \$2,700.

- b. She stated they will start trash distribution at the end of April.

**VOTE:** Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to accept Sean Genereux's resignation as Recycling Coordinator effective April 1st, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion to appoint Meryl Mandell as the Interim Recycling Coordinator, Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil aye, Stocker aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

XIII. Sign National Grid Account Setup for Library Solar Production

- a. The board discussed signing a National Grid customer application for metering service related to the solar connection at 66 Leverett Road.

**VOTE:** Farrell makes a motion to authorize Makepeace-O'Neil to sign the National Grid Account Setup Customer Application for metering service related to the solar connection at 66 Leverett Rd., Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Makepeace-O'Neil aye, Stocker aye, Farrell aye; motion carries.

XIV. Town Administrator Report:

- a. Voelker stated that she has started to create a list of future projects the new Town Administrator will need to do. She is trying her best to ensure a smooth transition.
- b. PFAS- The annual PFAS reporting was signed and submitted on March 24<sup>th</sup>. Voelker stated Brennan Mailloux will be taking over the PFAS letters and that there are still some outstanding invoices that need to be figured out. She stated that the town needs to figure out how we are going to pay for PFAS next year.
- c. She stated that Gail mentioned to her there is a need to borrow \$300,000 before the end of the fiscal year, related to previous town meeting voted articles. (2023-\$150,000) (2024-\$150,000). This needs to be resolved by June 30<sup>th</sup> to avoid impact on free cash. Ryan will have a discussion with our financial advisor and the banks. The town can potentially do a temporary borrow to get over June 30<sup>th</sup> and protect the free cash.
- d. Voelker stated at the next Select Board meeting (April 8<sup>th</sup>) the Animal Inspector will come to discuss her situation. She stated we have no protocol in terms of Dog Officers, and this would be important to discuss especially with the Police Department. She believes we need an established form of contact to the Dog Officer, and we need to make sure Animal Inspector reports are being reported to the right authorities.
- e. Voelker discussed having a potential Meet and Greet for the new Town Administrator during the first week of her employment on Tuesday, April 8<sup>th</sup>. This would be for department heads and committee heads. The new Town Administrator will start April 7<sup>th</sup> as her first day.
- f. Work with Brennan Mailloux on the Annual Town Meeting warrant is ongoing.

- g. Voelker stated the new Town Administrator will get Becky's old laptop and will be supplied with informational documents and resources on her laptop to help her understand her role and her responsibilities.

XV. Meeting adjourned at 6:25 pm to enter Executive Session for Reason #2.

**VOTE:** Makepeace-O'Neil makes a motion to adjourn the meeting at 6:33 pm, and enter Executive Meeting for reason #2, To conduct strategy sessions in preparation for negotiations with nonunion personnel or to conduct collective bargaining sessions or contract negotiations with nonunion personnel. The Select Board will **Not** be returning to public session.

Stocker seconds. Roll call vote Stocker: aye, Makepeace-O'Neil: aye; motion carries.

Administrative Actions:

1. Farrell to fill out the building form for the school.
2. Makepeace-O'Neil to sign the National Grid Customer Application for the solar connection at 66 Leverett Rd.
3. B. Mailloux to put the Animal Inspector discussion on the April 8 Meeting Agenda.
4. Voelker to organize a Meet and Greet for the new Town Administrator on Tuesday, April 9<sup>th</sup>.
5. Voelker and B. Mailloux to continue work on the Annual Town Meeting warrant.
6. The Select Board to complete their Annual Town Report.
7. Gabe to follow up on the \$300,000 borrowing issue with Ryan Mailloux (Treasurer) and the financial advisor.
8. Select Board to develop a protocol for the dog officer in collaboration with the Police Department.

Document and Other Items Used at the Meeting:

1. FY25 Emergency Communications Grant Reimbursement Form
2. New Town Administrator Contract
3. Electronic Funds Transfer Authorization Form
4. Commonwealth of Massachusetts Standard Green Communities Contract Form
5. Expression of Interest for Rural Development Fund
6. Appointment Letters for Jeff Lacy and Meryl Mandell
7. Amherst Pelham School Debt Acknowledgement Letter

Respectfully submitted,  
Brennan Mailloux  
Administrative Assistant  
Town Administrator/Select Board

\*\* A full version of the 3/25/2025 SB meeting is available to view on the Town of Shutesbury's YouTube page: